

miniMAG

issue60

echo



2009

Phoenix Ning

Black board. Red scarf.
A fountain pen in my hand.
Copying hanzi into grids.
Lining up and going down
to the fields at dusk.
March to political tunes
and stretch our limbs.
Pack up to be picked up
by guardians outside the gate,
their gossip sharp and loud.

Every meal a delight. Taste buds in paradise.
Roasted white radishes and spicy lotus root.
Served fresh from the cafeteria in metal bowls.
Devoured in the classroom. We always want more.
Homemade recipes that might go extinct.
Seafood noodles with bamboo shoots.
Served fresh by my great uncle when
the family meets in the seventh-floor apartment.
The adults warring over mahjong and the kids
sipping orange juice while watching cartoons.

Learning two instruments with private tutors.
One is the electronic keyboard in a little room
where the coach wields a pastel striped pencil
that she uses to strike my hands
when my fingers fail to lift high or

my notes become jumbled like my thoughts.
The other is the hulusi. The cucurbit flute.
A gourd with three pipes attached.
A treasure from Yunnan. An instrument
I will grow to love years later, but not now.

Coming down with the swine flu in November.
Harsh hospital lights. Antibiotic IV twice a day.
My first roommate is a boy with tuberculosis.
My second roommate is a four-year-old girl.
Jackie Chan Adventures playing on TV.
Dreaming that I can go outside after ten long nights.
Returning to my second grade classroom on the third floor.
My classmates issuing a collective cry of welcome.
They don't judge my name or face because we are all alike.
At the time, this is nothing. Fourteen years later, it is everything.



OCEAN CITY, MD

S.P. Irit

The tangled glass
in the parking
lot "of time left
to spend," she said,
winging across avenues
deserted and held empty
at last the seagulls fall
silent and only ozone
is in the alleys. The bar darkened
Hannah Montana orders
another shot and it closes
as the swift tide on
the sand, castles all swept,
time squandered coins
to the arcade, to the
city that takes teenagers
in daisy-dukes and spits
up the menthol-hungry
women in gas station lots
"of time," she said,
glancing over
clouds, over me, over-
fed belly bulging over
denim "before"
the storm hits
at last the city is razed.



Insomnia

Sean Woodard

Numb and drowsy,
I lift the bottle to my lips.

Stewardesses drip lemon juice
on rotting oysters, feeding

this luxuriant libertine
in need of water like dehydrated plants.

Closing my eyes, I dream
of dying away gently.

But sleep exists only for God
in the milky bluish light.

REVIEW

Ulysses

Alex Prestia

it tastes like swell swirl
it tastes like 40 pages
no punctuation. and it does make sense
one long train of thought
across prose-and-page-and-hops-and-wheat.
pithy, it's a book of japes (I say japes now)

there's this discord
old sexpats talk about adventures
up and down the pattaya strip
shame is a made up concept

he keeps going further,
I was warned, down the allagash hole
down trashy heaps of digital hentai comics you
won't admit to. references better left.
(it's 2023, people still pretend they don't look at hentai and throw the moral
panic back at you)

each morning I make coffee. it takes time to make coffee. it takes time to
wake up. it takes time to chug down a v8. it takes time to fall in love. it
takes time to get married. it takes time to betray someone. it takes time for
them to betray you back.

why? combined with "did you read it because you wanted to fit in? show
off? look smart? did you understand each and every reference on every
page on the deepest level? is it cool because M. Monroe kept a copy in her

car?"

If Amouranth read it.

if alpharad read it, would I like it less? (yes)

my contemporaries aren't dying regularly yet;

death to us is 'hugboxing'

a writer within our small circle'

s writing because then we are their bottom/

twink/shill forever.

never admit you liked anything; it is death—

use this section as a lighthouse (!!!!!!!!!)

the imagery is obvious:

sailors drowning on rocks,

a doomed ship of semi-anonymous writers,

AI Art as a release. I give it: grotesque/beautiful woman on beach showing her legs/non-euclidean/anime/lofi/classicism/lonely/bright-lighting/vivid colors/high contrast/ 9:18/ink illustration/oil painting/anime and it builds a little world just for me. It can create mostly whatever I like. Like, I can combine anime/space and anime/car. But Renaissance/classicism/oil paint on canvas/fast car on highway is a no-go. Renaissance minds do not make good cars; my kingdom for a Wawa. Great art has always been stealing, I reassure myself.

take a trailer

up to the allagash mountains

upper country

the big herd in the sky

It's a Belgian triple somewhere between Smokey&theBandit and

Dostoyevsky's Idiot -or-

or something specifically Belgish

In Bruges? anyways

didn't get it the way

I was supposed to get it.

but I got it the way

that I got it

and believe that every

sentence did have meaning,

that's my biggest issue

with it

after dark is my favorite murakami book (it's actually the second bakery attack, but this is about time, like that movie big trouble with tim allen)

I get these Onlyfans bots on Snapchat and they send me videos of these absolute 10s, with bodies like a perfect pear, then the link to givegivegive. And I'm like, I'm good, but I do enjoy your art. I'm confident there's enough money in it for her. Easy money. More more easy money, please.

some irish fella in an eyepatch
you're in on it
you get it
there's no it
you only like it
like an NYU student
likes anything.

I only find myself attracted to women that I deem secretly miserable. Beautiful songs and heavy hearts. Macabre Instagram Posts and cute selfie stories. Calm seas with foreboding clouds. That sort of thing. I would not have touched myself until I saw the limp.

You shouldn't be allowed to like anything for 3 years post-graduation. High school or undergrad. College seniors are allowed to like things if they have a healthy dread of the real world. Non-college grads get to feel real shit sooner. (Holds true in: America, China, England, France, Germany **from what I can tell they have a 100% matriculation rate**, Morocco, Senegal, South Africa **although post-grad should be replaced with post-live-in-city-fulltime if you speak Afrikaans**, Australia, New Zealand *an oddly egoless people, ily*, Wales, Ireland, Finland, Japan, South Korea ***1 year after dodging draft***, Thailand, Indonesia, Kenya, India, and Italy)

Whenever I get in a sexual panic
I too, tell everyone I know
through thinly veiled characters

I don't like to tell the same story twice
great storytellers retell and retell and retell
embellish and build and reimagine
craft a beginning middle and end
it was a strange memory the first time
i don't like to tell the same story twice

There's an attic here
and christmas ornaments
there's the moon
and seasons and bi
and wheels and wheels

I think I like having wheels the most
vrooomvrrroooooommmvroooooommmmm

I miss that the most
bloom and science

there are S. Dedaluses everywhere; bloom is rare

so based so bad so good i know eveything sooooo long poem with rhyme
scheme that i can explain that hides the ideas that hides the ideas that
hides the ideas that are boring i am borign i can not forget that i am boring
but the triplicate duplicate iamb jam that i shoved down the gooses neck to
wring and say i rung the bell that says i am the best poet and know the
most and the rules are the rules i am just playing by them, there are fo
course older rules and every once and a while i will pull themostolderst and
show you exactly why i am the correct idea on all things /lit/



Intermission

Taya Boyles

between the convergence
and absence, the smothering cocoon
tearing, light descending,
the ocean's breath in an iron lung
bellows and billows
chimney-smoke bells
winded and strung
like a red ribboned
curtain pulling back for applause

I find my poems stop when they
ache

Feeding Frenzy

Mariela

I don't know the path I'm walking,
because it's never been before.
I am a pioneer woman.
Salt of the earth.
Salty like ocean waves tousling my tongue,
Salty like semen,
Salty like life.
Luckily,
life ebbs and flows like the tides.
Rising and retracting.
The ocean breathes life into itself.
Every rolling wave,
like a pregnant belly giving birth.
Collapsing and dissolving into its own matter.
Lost inside.
Not knowing where it begins and where it ends.
I wonder if the ocean knows its own size?
Strength?
Vastness?
Does the ocean know the immensity of its power?
I wonder...
Do I know mine?
I am one person; in one country-
continent,
planet,
universe.
One person; wondering if you're that one person for me?
But, do I even believe?
I believe, I do-
That the tides are controlled by the moon and that I need to trust you,
like the moon trusts the sun to shine after their night shift.
I need to be sure you'll come in the morning.
That you won't leave me in the darkness of my mind.
Lost at sea,
staving off sharks;
bloodthirsty for me.
Feeding frenzy.



Faceless Words Trying to Speak

Richard LefDue

Poems jealous of old photos
left behind in shoe boxes
for a distant relative or stranger
to dump on the floor,
hoping to find money,
but at least the third cousin,
twice removed, might be polite
enough to clean up the mess,
even if they never heard
the poet's deathbed prayer
waking up fantasies of a thrift store
afterlife, and reviving memories of the \$4.89
they were paid for a sonnet years ago,
when dying seemed only a metaphor for life.

to my brother, who died at seventeen

R.N. Penmer

i dream that we sit
on the lip of a suburban hill,
watching the valley fill with molten gold,
a honeymelon sunrise.

under the gilted tarpaulin of horizons, you are there
beside me, crushing the petals of a chrysanthemum
between thumb and forefinger, talking
about a car you want to buy, to get from one
axis, one planetary nebula
to another

a car fated
to lie, charred, at the foot of a hill
after tumbling off a mountain road in the late
afternoon, with christina mayhew in the back seat,
two lives evaporating into the evening air

you talk about christina now – a story i can no longer remember,
although I am reminded of
autumn flowers with their heads plucked off, and twilight,
and stars set against a rim of gold.
it is a funny story, so i laugh. i dream that i laugh
so hard that tears jab the behinds of my eyes.

and i raise my laughter aloft, high
upon the altar of my bronze tabernacle
so the bitter idols of myrrh will witness
the silver-clear threads of my final expiation

then i lift my hand to brush against your jacket,
only to see you disintegrate
into a million droplets of amber.

even in a dream i know
that i am not my brother's keeper.



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“2009” by Phoenix Ning
Website: <https://www.ladyphoenixning.com> (?)
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Goodreads: Phoenix Ning

“OCEAN CITY, MD” by S.P. Irit
read "The Sayings of the Desert Fathers"

“Interlude” by Taya Boyles
Insta: @tayatheauthor
FB: <https://www.facebook.com/tayaboylespoetry>
TikTok: @tayabtheauthor

“Feeding Frenzy” by Mariela
Twitter: @marielasmind
Insta: @marimindmagic
Website: www.mindmagic.space
FB: marimindmagic

“Insomnia” by Sean Woodard
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Books: <http://seanwoodard.com>

“Faceless Words Trying to Speak” by Richard LeDue
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“to my brother, who died at seventeen” by R.N. Penner

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